

2 The Coming of Independence

Objectives You may wish to call students' attention to the objectives in the Section Preview. The objectives are reflected in the main headings of the section.

Bellringer Ask students what problems a basketball team with five star players might have. Elicit that individual brilliance without teamwork does not win championships. Explain that in this section, they will learn how 13 individual colonies learned to work together.

Vocabulary Builder Have students study the terms in the Political Dictionary to find three terms that are directly related to the idea of colonies working together. As students read the section, have them use the text to tie all of the terms to the development of a unified American government.

Lesson Plan

Teaching the Main Ideas **L3**

1. Focus Tell students that a spirit of cooperation developed slowly among the American colonies as they responded to increasingly harsh British actions. Ask students to discuss what they know about early attempts at cooperation.

2. Instruct Tell students that the unity reflected in the Declaration of Independence did not come easily. Lead a discussion of how unity developed over time and what pushed the colonies to join together. Conclude by asking whether State constitutions added to that unity.

3. Close/Reteach Remind students that colonial unity developed over time in response to specific events. Have students make a chart showing each colonial attempt at promoting cooperation and the reason behind it.

2 The Coming of Independence

Section Preview

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Explain** how Britain's colonial policies contributed to the growth of self-government in the colonies.
- 2. Identify** some of the steps that led to growing feelings of colonial unity.
- 3. Compare** the outcomes of the First and Second Continental Congresses.
- 4. Analyze** the ideas in the Declaration of Independence.
- 5. Describe** the drafting of the first State constitutions and summarize the constitutions' common features.

WHY IT MATTERS

Changes in British colonial policies led to resentment in the colonies and eventually to the American Revolution. Ideas expressed in the early State constitutions influenced the development of the governmental system under which we live today.

POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ confederation
- ★ Albany Plan of Union
- ★ delegate
- ★ boycott
- ★ repeal
- ★ popular sovereignty

“We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.” Benjamin Franklin is said to have spoken these words on July 4, 1776, as he and the other members of the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence. Those who heard him may have chuckled. But they also may have felt a shiver, for Franklin's humor carried a deadly serious message.



▲ Colonists who made their tea in this pot voiced their opposition to the Stamp Act.

In this section, you will follow the events that led to the momentous decision to break with Great Britain.⁷ You will also consider the new State governments that were established with the coming of Independence.

Britain's Colonial Policies

The 13 colonies, which had been separately established, were separately controlled under the king, largely through the Privy Council and the Board of Trade in London. Parliament took little part in the management of the

⁷England became Great Britain by the Act of Union with Scotland in 1707.

colonies. Although it did become more and more interested in matters of trade, it left matters of colonial administration almost entirely to the Crown.⁸

Over the century and a half that followed the first settlement at Jamestown, the colonies developed within that framework of royal control. In theory, they were governed in all important matters from London. But London was more than 3,000 miles away, and it took nearly two months to sail that distance across a peril-filled Atlantic. So, in practice, the colonists became used to a large measure of self-government.

Each colonial legislature began to assume broad lawmaking powers. Many found the power of the purse to be very effective. They often bent a royal governor to their will by not voting the money for his salary until he came to terms with them. As one member of New Jersey's Assembly put it: "Let us keep the dogges poore, and we'll make them do as we please."

⁸Much of English political history can be told in terms of the centuries-long struggle for supremacy between monarch and Parliament. That conflict was largely settled by England's Glorious Revolution of 1688, but it did continue through the American colonial period and into the nineteenth century. However, Parliament paid little attention to the American colonies until very late in the colonial period.



Block Scheduling Strategies

Consider these suggestions to manage extended class time:

■ Ask students to assume the roles of members of the Second Continental Congress who are writing their memoirs. Have each student write a description based on how Britain's colonial policies contributed to self-government in the colonies as well as what caused feelings of colonial unity to grow. Have students read their memoirs to a partner or share with the class.

■ To extend the Constitutional Principles activity on page 38, ask students to continue examining the Declaration of Independence to determine if violations of any other constitutional principles were used as justification for independence. Have students identify any references to these principles and explain how they were used to justify independence.

By the mid-1700s, the relationship between Britain and the colonies had become, in fact if not in form, federal. This meant that the central government in London was responsible for colonial defense and for foreign affairs. It also provided a uniform system of money and credit and a common market for colonial trade. Beyond that, the colonies were allowed a fairly wide amount of self-rule. Little was taken from them in direct taxes to pay for the central government. The few regulations set by Parliament, mostly about trade, were largely ignored.

This was soon to change. Shortly after George III came to the throne in 1760, Britain began to deal more firmly with the colonies. Restrictive trading acts were expanded and enforced. New taxes were imposed, mostly to support British troops in North America.

Many colonists took strong exception to these moves. They objected to taxes imposed on them from afar. This arrangement, they claimed, was “taxation without representation.” They saw little need for the costly presence of British troops on North American soil, since the French had been defeated and their power broken in the French and Indian War (1754–1763).

The colonists considered themselves British subjects loyal to the Crown. They refused, however, to accept Parliament’s claim that it had a right to control their local affairs.

The king’s ministers were poorly informed and stubborn. They pushed ahead with their policies, despite the resentments they stirred in America. Within a few years, the colonists faced a fateful choice: to submit or to revolt.

Growing Colonial Unity

A decision to revolt was not one to be taken lightly—or alone. The colonies would need to learn to work together if they wanted to succeed. Indeed long before the 1770s, several attempts had been made to promote cooperation among the colonies.

Early Attempts

In 1643 the Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, New Haven, and Connecticut settlements formed the New England Confederation. A **confederation** is a joining of several groups for a common purpose. In the New England Confederation, the

Voices on Government

Benjamin Franklin dedicated years to public service, including time as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress, a commissioner to France during the War for Independence, and a member of the Constitutional Convention. Franklin proposed the Albany Plan of Union to provide for the defense of the American colonies. In his autobiography, he spoke of its defeat and defended his plan:

“The different and contrary Reasons of dislike to my Plan, makes me suspect that it was really the true Medium; and I am still of Opinion it would have been happy for both Sides the Water if it had been adopted. The Colonies so united would have been sufficiently strong to have defended themselves; there would then have been no need of Troops from England; of course the subsequent Pretence for Taxing America, and the bloody Contest it occasioned, would have been avoided.”



Evaluating the Quotation

What did Franklin see as the ultimate result of the failure to adopt the Albany Plan of Union? Do you think this was a reasonable conclusion?

settlements formed a “league of friendship” for defense against the Native Americans. As the danger from Native Americans passed and friction among the settlements grew, the confederation lost importance and finally dissolved in 1684.

In 1696 William Penn offered an elaborate plan for intercolonial cooperation, largely in trade, defense, and criminal matters. It received little attention and was soon forgotten.

The Albany Plan

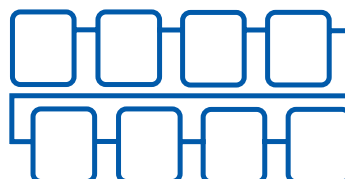
In 1754 the British Board of Trade called a meeting of seven of the northern colonies at Albany: Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the problems of colonial trade and the danger of attacks by the French and their Native American allies. Here, Benjamin Franklin offered what came to be known as the **Albany Plan of Union**.

Organizing Information

To make sure students understand the main points of this section, you may wish to use the flowchart graphic organizer to the right.

Tell students that a flowchart shows a sequence of events. Ask students to use the flowchart to record the sequence of events that led to the forming of the first State constitutions.

Teaching Tip A template for this graphic organizer can be found in the Section Support Transparencies, Transparency 4.



Reading Strategy

Predicting Content

Before they read the section, have students read all the headings. Ask them to use those headings to write a prediction about the content of the section in one or two sentences. Tell students to read the section to test their predictions.

Point-of-Use Resources

Guided Reading and Review Unit 1 booklet, p. 10 provides students with practice identifying the main ideas and key terms of this section.

Lesson Planner For complete lesson planning suggestions, see the Lesson Planner booklet, section 2.

Political Cartoons See p. 8 of the Political Cartoons booklet for a cartoon relevant to this section.

Section Support Transparencies Transparency 11, *Visual Learning*; Transparency 110, *Political Cartoon*

Answer to . . .

Evaluating the Quotation Franklin thought the ultimate result was the War for Independence. Students’ answers will vary on the reasonableness of that conclusion; some may suggest that since the differences between the colonies and England were so great, war was inevitable.

Differentiated Instruction

L3

Remind students of key historical events that led to the colonies' decision to break away from Britain. Based on this discussion and what they have learned in class, have students write their own Declaration of Rights and Grievances to the king. Encourage them to include in the letter of protest those acts and policies the colonists strongly denounced.

Background Note

Political Talk

While angry colonists did indeed boycott British goods in the 1760s and '70s, that is not what they would have called it—the word *boycott* had not been invented yet. The term comes from the name of Captain C. C. Boycott, an unfortunate English landlord. Boycott was the first among a number of absentee landlords against whom the Irish Land League protested in the 1870s. The word *boycott*, originally written with a capital “B,” gained wide popularity in the United Kingdom in the 1880s, and was subsequently adopted into American usage.

Point-of-Use Resources



Close Up on Primary Sources

Patrick Henry, Speech to the Virginia Provincial Convention (1775), p. 29; Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776), p. 57

Answer to . . .

Critical Thinking They wanted to demonstrate their resolve to prevent the sale of British goods in the colonies.

In his plan, Franklin proposed the formation of an annual congress of **delegates** (representatives) from each of the 13 colonies. That body would have the power to raise military and naval forces, make war and peace with the Native Americans, regulate trade with them, tax, and collect customs duties.

Franklin's plan was ahead of its time. It was agreed to by the representatives attending the Albany meeting, but it was turned down by the colonies and by the Crown. Franklin's plan was to be remembered later.

The Stamp Act Congress

Britain's harsh tax and trade policies of the 1760s fanned resentment in the colonies. Parliament had passed a number of new laws, among them the Stamp Act of 1765. That law required the use of tax stamps on all legal documents, on certain business agreements, and on newspapers.

The new taxes were widely denounced, in part because the rates were perceived as severe, but largely because they amounted to “taxation without representation.” In October of 1765, nine colonies—all except Georgia, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Virginia—sent delegates to the Stamp Act Congress in New York. They prepared a strong protest, called the Declaration of Rights and Grievances, against the new British policies and sent it to the king. These actions marked the first time a significant number of the colonies had joined to oppose the British government.

Parliament repealed the Stamp Act, but frictions mounted. New laws were passed and new policies were made to tie the colonies more closely to London. Colonists showed their resentment and anger in wholesale evasion of the laws. Mob violence erupted at several ports, and many colonists supported a **boycott** of English goods. A boycott is a refusal to buy or sell certain products or services. On March 5, 1770, British troops in Boston fired on a jeering crowd, killing five, in what came to be known as the Boston Massacre.

Organized resistance was carried on through Committees of Correspondence, which had grown out of a group formed by Samuel Adams in Boston in 1772. These committees soon spread throughout the colonies, providing a network for cooperation and the exchange of information among the patriots.

Protests multiplied. The famous Boston Tea Party took place on December 16, 1773. A group of men, disguised as Native Americans, boarded three tea ships in Boston harbor and dumped the cargo into the sea to protest British control of the tea trade.

The First Continental Congress

In the spring of 1774, Parliament passed yet another set of laws, this time to punish the colonists for the troubles in Boston and elsewhere. These new laws, denounced in America as the Intolerable Acts, prompted widespread calls for a meeting of all the colonies.

Delegates from every colony except Georgia met in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774. Many of the ablest men of the day were there: Samuel Adams and John Adams of Massachusetts; Roger Sherman of Connecticut; Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island; John Dickinson and Joseph Galloway of Pennsylvania; John Jay and Philip Livingston of New York; George Washington, Richard Henry Lee, and Patrick Henry of Virginia; and John Rutledge of South Carolina.

For nearly two months the members of that First Continental



▲ This colored engraving, printed in 1793, is the earliest known American depiction of the Boston Tea Party. **Critical Thinking** What did the colonists hope to accomplish by destroying the cargo of tea?

Preparing for Standardized Tests

Have students read the passages under *Growing Colonial Unity* on pp. 35–36 and then answer the following question.

What is the best explanation for why early attempts at colonial cooperation failed?

- A No one put forth a formal plan.
- B The British Board of Trade prevented colonists from proposing plans.
- C Colonists were content with the government as it was.
- ☒ D Colonists still considered themselves British subjects, and did not feel particular loyalty to the other colonies.



▲ Washington once complained that his soldiers were forced to “eat every kind of horse food but hay.” He won the respect of the men who served under his command when he demanded that Congress provide better treatment for the army. **Critical Thinking** How does this nineteenth-century engraving of Washington and his troops welcoming a train of supplies reinforce Washington’s image as a strong leader?

Congress discussed the worsening situation and debated plans for action. They sent a Declaration of Rights, protesting Britain’s colonial policies, to King George III. The delegates urged each of the colonies to refuse all trade with England until the hated taxes and trade regulations were **repealed** (withdrawn, cancelled). The delegates also called for the creation of local committees to enforce that boycott.

The meeting adjourned on October 26, with a call for a second congress to be convened the following May. Over the next several months, all the colonial legislatures, including Georgia’s, gave their support to the actions of the First Continental Congress.

The Second Continental Congress

During the fall and winter of 1774–1775, the British government continued to refuse to compromise, let alone reverse, its colonial policies. It reacted to the Declaration of Rights as it had to other expressions of colonial discontent—with even stricter and more repressive measures.

The Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia on May 10, 1775. By then, the Revolution had begun. The “shot heard ’round the world” had been fired. The battles of Lexington and Concord had been fought three weeks earlier, on April 19.

Representatives

Each of the 13 colonies sent representatives to the Congress. Most of those who had attended the First Continental Congress were again present. Most notable among the newcomers were Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania and John Hancock of Massachusetts.

Hancock was chosen president of the Congress.⁹ Almost at once, a continental army was created, and George Washington was appointed its commander in chief. Thomas Jefferson then took Washington’s place in the Virginia delegation.

Our First National Government

The Second Continental Congress became, by force of circumstance, the nation’s first national government. However, it rested on no constitutional base. It was condemned by the British as an unlawful assembly and a den of traitors. But it was supported by the force of public opinion and practical necessity.

The Second Continental Congress served as the first government of the United States for five fateful years, from the formal adoption of the

⁹Peyton Randolph, who had also served as president of the First Continental Congress, was originally chosen for the office. He resigned on May 24, however, because the Virginia House of Burgesses, of which he was the speaker, had been called into session. Hancock was then elected to succeed him.

Background Note

Economics

The Second Continental Congress had not only to invent a new system of government during a war, but it also had to cope with the worst period of inflation in U.S. history. Between 1775 and 1779, the value of the \$191 million in Continental bills the Congress printed to finance the war sank dramatically. In 1777, it took \$3 in bills to purchase goods worth \$1 in gold or silver. By 1779, the ratio had shot up to 42 to 1, skyrocketed to 100 to 1 in 1780, and then to 146 to 1 in 1781. In 1781, the Congress offered to buy back the bills at a rate of 40 to 1—an inglorious end for the first national currency.

Answer to . . .

Critical Thinking Sample answer: Washington is at the center of the engraving, and the other people are clearly paying deference to him.




Differentiated Instruction

L2

Time 90 minutes.**Purpose** Paraphrase the first paragraph of the Declaration of Independence.**Grouping** Three to four students.**Activity** Have group members discuss the meaning of the opening paragraph of the Declaration. Then have students work together to rewrite the paragraph to express their understanding of its meaning.**Roles** Discussion leader, recorder, and spokesperson.**Close** When the recorder has prepared the final draft, ask the spokesperson to read the group's paragraph to the class. Then have the class discuss the group's interpretation.

LPR

Point-of-Use Resources

 **Government Assessment Rubrics**
Analyzing a Primary Source, p. 14 **Block Scheduling with Lesson Strategies**
Additional activities for Chapter 2 appear on p. 20. **The Enduring Constitution** Popular Sovereignty, p. 3 **Close Up on Primary Sources**
Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), p. 30; Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776), p. 31 **Basic Principles of the Constitution**
Transparencies Transparencies 9–15, *Popular Sovereignty*

Declaration of Independence in July 1776 until the Articles of Confederation went into effect on March 1, 1781. During that time the Second Continental Congress fought a war, raised armies and a navy, borrowed funds, bought supplies, created a money system, made treaties with foreign powers, and did those other things that any government would have had to do in the circumstances.

The unicameral Congress exercised both legislative and executive powers. In legislative matters, each colony—later, State—had one vote. Executive functions were handled by committees of delegates.

The Declaration of Independence

Slightly more than a year after the Revolution began, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia proposed to the Congress:

PRIMARY Sources “Resolved, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.”

—Resolution of June 7, 1776

Congress named a committee of five—Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, and Thomas Jefferson—to prepare a proclamation of independence. Their momentous product, the Declaration of Independence, was very largely the work of Jefferson.

On July 2, the final break came. The delegates agreed to Lee's resolution—but only after spirited debate, for many of the delegates had serious doubts about the wisdom of a complete separation from England. Two days later, on July 4, 1776, they adopted the Declaration of Independence, proclaiming the existence of the new nation.

The Declaration announces the independence of the United States in its first paragraph. Much of the balance of the document—nearly two thirds of it—speaks of “the repeated injuries and usurpations” that led the colonists to revolt. At its heart, the Declaration proclaims:

PRIMARY Sources “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”

—The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America

With these brave words, the United States of America was born. The 13 colonies became free and independent States. The 56 men who signed the Declaration sealed it with this final sentence:

“And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.”

The First State Constitutions

In January 1776, New Hampshire adopted a constitution to replace its royal charter. Less than three months later, South Carolina followed suit. Then, on May 10, nearly two months before the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, the Congress urged each of the colonies to adopt: “such governments as shall, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents.”

Drafting State Constitutions

In 1776 and 1777, most of the States adopted written constitutions—bodies of fundamental laws setting out the principles, structures, and processes of their governments. Assemblies or conventions were commonly used to draft and then adopt these new documents.

Massachusetts set a lasting example in the constitution-making process. There, a convention

CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES

Popular Sovereignty

The Declaration of Independence clearly points to Great Britain's failure to honor the popular sovereignty of the colonies as a reason for their declaring independence. Much of the declaration is spent listing specific grievances that highlight ways that King George III failed to honor the colonies' popular sovereignty.

Activity

Have students view excerpts from the Declaration of Independence on this page or the entire document found on pages 40–43 to find specific examples of how it uses popular sovereignty as a basis for declaring independence. Have students share their examples with the class, then lead a discussion on the significance of popular sovereignty to the Declaration of Independence.

submitted its work to the voters for ratification. The Massachusetts constitution of 1780 is the oldest of the present-day State constitutions. In fact, it is the oldest written constitution in force anywhere in the world today.¹⁰

Common Features

The first State constitutions differed, sometimes widely, in detail. Yet they shared many similar features. The most common features were the principles of **popular sovereignty** (government can exist only with the consent of the governed), **limited government**, **civil rights and liberties**, and **separation of powers and checks and balances**. These principles are outlined in detail in the table at right.

The new State constitutions were rather brief documents. For the most part, they were declarations of principle and statements of limitation on governmental power. Memories of the royal governors were fresh, and the new State governors were given little real power. Most of the authority that was granted to State government was placed in the legislature. Elective terms of office were made purposely short, seldom more than one or two years. The right to vote was limited to those adult white males who could meet rigid qualifications, including property ownership.

¹⁰From independence until that constitution became effective in 1780, Massachusetts relied on its colonial charter, in force prior to 1691, as its fundamental law.

Common Features of State Constitutions

POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY	The principle of popular sovereignty was the basis for every new State constitution. That principle says that government can exist and function only with the consent of the governed. The people hold power and the people are sovereign.
LIMITED GOVERNMENT	The concept of limited government was a major feature of each State constitution. The powers delegated to government were granted reluctantly and hedged with many restrictions.
CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES	In every State it was made clear that the sovereign people held certain rights that the government must respect at all times. Seven of the new constitutions contained a bill of rights, setting out the “unalienable rights” held by the people.
SEPARATION OF POWERS AND CHECKS AND BALANCES	The powers granted to the new State governments were purposely divided among three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. Each branch was given powers with which to check (restrain the actions of) the other branches of the government.

Interpreting Tables Most of the newly created States adopted written constitutions in the two years following the Declaration of Independence. **Why did the first State constitutions share several common features?**

We shall return to the subject of State constitutions later, in Chapter 24. For now, note this very important point: The earliest of these documents were, within a very few years, to have a marked impact on the drafting of the Constitution of the United States.

Section 2 Assessment

Key Terms and Main Ideas

- Why did some colonists support a **boycott** of English goods?
- What was the **Albany Plan of Union** and how was it received by the colonies and by the Crown?
- Explain the concept of **popular sovereignty**.
- What was the outcome of the First Continental Congress?
- In what ways did the Second Continental Congress serve as the first national government?

Critical Thinking

- Distinguishing Fact from Opinion** The Declaration of Independence states that all men are endowed “with

Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-Quiz and vocabulary practice
Web Code: mqa-1022

- certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Is this statement a fact or opinion? Explain your answer.
- Expressing Problems Clearly** What problems arose from changes in British policy toward the colonies in the 1760s?



For: An activity on the Albany Plan
Web Code: mqd-1022

Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice
Web Code: mqa-1022



Typing in the Web Code when prompted will bring students directly to detailed instructions for this activity.

- Some students might suggest that as the Framers’ wrote the document, it was an opinion; others may say that as our government is based on this statement, it is now commonly held to be fact.

- Answers will vary, but should reflect an understanding that the new policies made colonists re-evaluate their relationship to Britain and eventually led to war.

Point-of-Use Resources



Guide to the Essentials Chapter 2, Section 2, p. 19 provides support for students who need additional review of section content. Spanish support is available in the Spanish edition of the Guide on p. 12.



Quiz Unit 1 booklet, p. 11 includes matching and multiple-choice questions to check students’ understanding of Section 2 content.



Presentation Pro CD-ROM Quizzes and multiple-choice questions check students’ understanding of Section 2 content.

Answers to . . .

Section 2 Assessment

- Many colonists supported a boycott of English goods as an act of protest against Britain’s taxes.
- The Albany Plan of Union was a plan for the 13 colonies to form a congress which would have the power to raise armies, make war and peace, establish trade, and impose taxes. The colonies and the Crown rejected the plan.
- Popular sovereignty is the idea that a government can only exist if it has the consent of those it governs.
- The First Continental Congress resulted in all colonial legislatures giving their support to several plans of action, including formalized boycotts. The Congress also produced a document of protest—the Declaration of Rights—which was sent to the king.
- The Second Continental Congress directed the war effort, borrowed money to finance the war, coined money, bought supplies, and made treaties with other governments.

Answer to . . .

Interpreting Tables They were all based on the ideals that had united the States in their fight for independence.